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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

SECRET (When Filled In) CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD BACKGROUND USE ONLY

COUNTRY SOUTH VIETNAM

REPORT NO. TDCS DB-3/657,031

SUBJECT FURTHER PLANNING OF LANG COUP GROUP

DATE DISTR. 2 OCTOBER 1963

PRECEDENCE PRIORITY

DATE OF INFO. 26-30 SEPTEMBER 1963

REFERENCES IN 31379

PLACE & DATE ACQ. VIETNAM, SAIGON (30 SEPTEMBER 1963)

APPRAISAL SEE BELOW

FIELD REPORT NO. FVS 9725

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE A CLOSE ASSOCIATE (C) OF LANG, FROM LANG.

APPR: LANG MAY BE MAKING COUP PLANS AS REPORTEDBUT THE DEGREE TO WHICH OTHER INDIVIDUALS NAMED MAY BE INVOLVED CANNOT BE JUDGED. GENERAL TY PROBABLY HAS SUPPORTED THE GENERALS' DEMANDS ON PRESIDENT DIEM. THE MEETING OF DIEM WITH THE TROOP COMMANDERS POSSIBLY TOOK PLACE AS REPORTED. LANG PROBABLY HOLDS THE VIEWS CITED.

1. SUMMARY. ON 30 SEPTEMBER 1963 HUYNH VAN LANG, PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS AT SAIGON UNIVERSITY SAID THAT LIEUTENANT GENERAL LE VAN TY, CHIEF, JOINT GENERAL STAFF (JGS), HAD REINFORCED THE GENERALS' DEMANDSFFOR GOVERNMENTAL REFORMS BUT THAT SOME GENERALS WERE CONVINCED THAT THE COUP SHOULD TAKE PLACE REGARDLESS OF WHETHER DIEM INITIATES REFORMS. BRIGADIER GENERAL TRAN THIEN KHIEM, CHIEF OF STAFF, JGS, WASCCONCERNED ABOUT VIET CONG MILITARY ACTIVITY NEAR SAIGON. HE AND OTHER GENERALS WANTED TO BE ASSURED OF UNITED STATES SUPPORT IN THE EVENT THAT A COUP SUCCEEDED. COLONEL DO MAU, CHIEF, MILITARY SECURITY

SECRET CLASSIFICATION — DISSEMINATION CONTROLS NO FOREIGN DISSEM/NO DISSEM ABROAD BACKGROUND USE ONLY CIB

GROUP 1 Excluded from automatic downgrading and declassification

STATE/INR	DIA	ARMY/ACSI	NAVY	AIR	JCS	SECDEF	NSA	NIC	XXXX	XXXX	OCI	ONE	OCR	XXXX	XXXX	XXXXX	EXO
STATE/DIR																	

SERVICE, HAS ATTEMPTED TO INFLUENCE VIETNAMESE AIR FORCE (VNAF) OFFICERS TO ATTACK GIA LONG PALACE. THE COUP PLOTTERS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT PRESIDENT DIEM'S MEETINGS WITH ARMY OFFICERS DURING WHICH THE LATTER RECEIVED GIFTS OF MONEY. LANG'S PLAN FOR REORGANIZATION OF THE GOVERNMENT FOLLOWING THE COUP HAS BEEN ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE AND HE HAS STARTED SELECTING MEMBERS OF A SHADOW GOVERNMENT. LANG HAS ADVISED POSTPONING THE COUP UNTIL HIS GOVERNMENTAL PLANNING HAS BEEN COMPLETED.

2. LANG MADE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS:

A. LIEUTENANT GENERAL LE VAN TY, RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE UNITED STATES, MET WITH OTHER GENERALS ON 26 OR 27 SEPTEMBER AND THEN SAW PRESIDENT DIEM TO URGE GOVERNMENTAL REFORMS, INCLUDING THE APPOINTMENT OF GENERALS TO THE MINISTRIES OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND INTERIOR.

B. GENERAL KHIEM AND OTHER GENERALS WERE BECOMING CONVINCED THAT REFORMS ALONE WOULD NOT BE SUFFICIENT AND THAT THE ENTIRE NGO FAMILY HAD TO BE REMOVED FROM OFFICE.

C. KHIEM WAS CONCERNED ABOUT INCREASED VIET CONG (VC) MILITARY ACTIVITY NEAR SAIGON AND THE COUP PLOTTERS FEARED POSSIBLE VC EXPLOITATION OF AN ATTEMPTED COUP D'ETAT.

D. KHIEM AND OTHER GENERALS DID NOT WISH TO ATTEMPT A COUP UNTIL IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD SUPPORT THEM IF THEIR COUP SUCCEEDED.

E. COLONEL DO MAU, WORKING THROUGH LIEUTENANT COLONELS NGUYEN CAO KY, 1ST TRANSPORT GROUP COMMANDER AND DO KHAC MAI, VNAF CHIEF OF STAFF, HAS INDEPENDENTLY ATTEMPTED TO INFLUENCE VNAF OFFICERS TO MOUNT A COUP AND ATTACK GIA LONG PALACE. LANG'S GROUP BELIEVED THAT MAU WAS TOO INDISCREET BUT PLANNED TO CAPITALIZE ON THE SITUATION IF THE VNAF DID BEGIN A COUP. (FIELD COMMENT. IT HAS BEEN REPORTED THAT MAI AND MAU WERE DISAPPOINTED THAT NO ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN AGAINST THE REGIME.)

F. GENERAL KHIEM CLAIMED THAT HELICOPTER UNITS WERE INCLUDED IN THE LANG COUP GROUP.

G. PRESIDENT DIEM RECENTLY SUMMONED MILITARY OFFICERS, WITH THE RANK OF CAPTAIN AND ABOVE, WHO COMMANDED TROOP UNITS IN AND NEAR SAIGON AND GAVE THEM SUMS OF MONEY RANGING FROM 30,000 TO 100,000 PIASTERS. THE MONEY OSTENSIBLY WAS SEIZED FROM THE VC. COLONEL NGUYEN VAN THIEN, VIETNAMESE ARMOR COMMANDER, RECEIVED 100,000 PIASTERS, WHICH APPARENTLY HAS CAUSED HIM TO RENEW HIS ALLEGIANCE TO DIEM. SOME JUNIOR OFFICERS COUNTED ON TO SUPPORT THE COUP HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY THEIR MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT, BUT OTHERS WERE NOT AND HAVE JOINED THE COUP GROUP.

(FIELD COMMENT. SEE FVS 9712 (TDCS-3/560,375) FOR THAO'S STATEMENT T THAT NHU HAD GIVEN LARGE SUMS OF MONEY TO MILITARY OFFICRS.)

H. DIEM HAS GIVEN LARGE SUMS OF MONEY TO COLONEL HUYNH HUU HIEN, VNAF COMMANDER. ACCORIDNG TO GENERAL KHIEM, DIEM HAS GIVEN HIEN ORDERS TO USE THE VNAF FOR COUNTERCOUP ACTION AND FOR EVACUATION OF THE PRESIDENT IF NECESSARY.

I. DIEM OFFERED LIEUTENANT COLONEL PHAM NGOC THAO, INSPECTOR OF STRATEGIC HAMLETS, THE POSITION OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NATIONAL POLICE WHILE NHU OFFERED HIM COMMAND OF THE SPECIAL FORCES. THAO, HOWEVER, HAS NOT WAVERED IN HIS SUPPORT OF THE COUP.

3. LANG SAID THAT HE HAS URGED DELAY IN MOUNTING THE COUP UNTIL HE HAS COMPLETED HIS PLANS FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT SO THAT THERE WOULD BE NO VOID FOR THE VC TO EXPLOIT. HE SAID THAT THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE HAS ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE HIS IDEAS CONCERNING ORGANIZATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT. (FIELD COMMENT: IN LANG'S PROPOSED GOVERNMENT THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE WOULD REPLACE PRESIDENT DIEM. THE TERM MINISTER WOULD BE USED INSTEAD OF COORDINATING SECRETARY OF STATE AND MINISTER OF SECURITY AND MINISTER OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS WOULD BE ADDED TO THE GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE, WHICH WOULD NOT DIFFER DRASTICALLY FROM THE PRESENT ONE.) LANG HAS SELECTED

THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS AS MEMBERS OF A SHADOW CABINET:

A. GENERAL KHIEM, MINISTER OF SECURITY

B. VO VAN HIEN, CURRENTLY A SAIGON LAWYER, MINISTER OF JUSTICE.

C. LANG, EITHER MINISTER OF ECONOMY OR DEPUTY MINISTER OF ECONOMY FOR FINANCE.

D. NGUYEN TON HOAN, PROMIENT OPPOSITION LEADER IN EXILE, MINISTER OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

E. NGUYEN THAI, OPPOSITION LEADER IN THE UNITED STATES, EITHER MINISTER OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS OR DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS FOR CIVIC ACTION.

F. MAJOR GENERAL TRAN VAN MINH, DEPUTY MINISTER OF SECURITY FOR DEFENSE.

G. NGUYEN HUY NGHIA, GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM (GVN) AMBASSADOR TO TOKYO, DEPUTY MINISTER OF SECURITY FOR INTERIOR.

H. NGUYEN HUU CHAU, FORMER MINISTER OF INTERIOR UNDER DIEM CURRENTLY IN EXILE, DEPUTY MINISTER OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

I. AU TRUONG THANH, PROFESSIONAL ECONOMIST, DEPUTY MINISTER OF ECONOMY FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS.

J. LIEUTENANT COLONEL PHAM NGOC THAO, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NATIONAL POLICE.

LANG HAS CONTACTED ALL OF THE ABOVE EXCEPT NGHIA, CHAU AND HOA. HE HAS SENT A CATHOLIC PRIEST TO PARIS TO CONTACT CHAU AND WAS PLANNING TO CONTACT THE OTHERS EVENTUALLY.

4. LANG SAID THAT HE WAS STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE INCLUSION OF TRAN KIM TUYEN, RECENTLY ASSIGNED AS GVN CONSUL GENERAL TO CAIRO, IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT. NEVERTHELESS, THAO HAS ASSURED TUYEN'S SUPPORTERS IN SAIGON THAT TUYEN WILL BE A MEMBER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE IN ORDER TO ASSURE THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE COUP.

5. FIELD DISSEM. STATE (AMBASSADOR LODGE) USMACV (GENERAL HARKINS) CINCPAC PACFLT ARPAC PACAF.

END OF MESSAGE